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A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDCY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1932

By

SAUL K. PADOVER

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PRINCE KAUNITZ AND THE FIRST PARTITION OF POLAND

When Augustus III, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, died on 5 October, 1763, the Polish question emerged anew to plague the European courts. Foreseeing just such an emergency, Frederick II and Catharine II had made an alliance, on 8 June, 1762, binding themselves to support each other in Poland. France, the ally of Austria, was, of course, opposed to the Russo-Prussian combination.[1] Louis XV favoured the candidacy of either Prince Xavier, the second son of Augustus III, or the Prince de Conti. Above all, the French king was interested that the "liberty of the Poles in their choice" be assured.[2] Catherine II, on the other hand, favoured her former lover, Stanislaus August Poniatowski, a poor noble, who was, however, related to the powerful family of the Czartoryskis. The King of Prussia implicitly supported the Tsaritsa.

In this combination, it is obvious, Austria, the neighbour of Prussia and Poland, and the ally of France, could tip the scales. If the Court of Vienna had decided to give vigorous aid to the French, the result would have been either a compromise in Poland or another succession war. It was a delicate situation that faced the Austrian Government, and Kaunitz, the almost absolute arbiter of Vienna's foreign policy, could not make up his mind what to do. With the Seven Years' War fresh in his mind, he dreaded a new war with Prussia. The Austrian Chancellor also hoped for an alliance with Russia, and did not wish to antagonise Catharine. As for French support, Kaunitz had a justifiable distrust of the corrupt and inefficient government of Louis XV. When the French chargé d'affaires in Vienna, Girard, asked Kaunitz to go hand in hand with France in Poland, the Chancellor replied :[3]

"What is the use of tying our own hands? Either the Poles, in spite of your assurances, will be afraid, and will follow the impulse which Russia will give them, and then all is at an end, or else there will be a double election, and the two parties will fight. Then Russia will send in her troops, and their superiority will crush the opposing party, unless other powers go to war for it. Now, as none of them will do so, all will be at an end in this second case likewise."

The Russian Empress proceeded with a systematic campaign to

[1] "Il importe infiniment à la France," wrote Count Broglie, Louis' friend, to Tercier, on 26 May, 1762, "de conserver de l'influence en Pologne et de s'y assurer des moyens qu'on puisse opposer aux Russes"; *Pologne*, 1752–1764, a manuscript, containing Broglie letters, in the possession of Professor Westfall Thompson.

[2] Louis to Tercier, undated, in M. E. Boutaric, *Correspondance secrète inédite de Louis XV*, I, 290.

[3] 6 March, 1764, in Duc de Broglie, *The King's Secret*, II, pp. 218–19.

demoralise Poland. She instructed her ambassadors in Poland, Keyserling and Repnin, to perpetuate the Polish anarchy and to crush all opponents to Poniatowski. She poured troops and money into the moribund republic, and at the same time issued a pious manifesto, promising to maintain Polish liberties and independence.[4]

In spite of Polish opposition and French intrigues, Poniatowski was elected King on 7 September, 1764, much to the disgust of Louis XV and to the annoyance of Kaunitz. Although Austria was cool to the new monarch,[5] Kaunitz hoped the Polish troubles would settle by themselves. But he miscalculated. Catharine was not satisfied merely with placing her own king on the throne, she also wished to control the republic entirely. The problem of the dissidents gave her the desired opportunity. The dissidents, composed of Greek Orthodox, Calvinists and Lutherans, had been given complete toleration since 1573. By the 17th century, the Jesuit-inspired Polish Catholics began to abrogate the dissidents' rights and privileges. The last anti-dissident legislation had taken place in 1733. Catharine, with the support of Frederick, now asked the Polish King to restore the dissidents to their rights. Poniatowski balked at the order, but Russian bayonets forced the cowed Polish Diet to jam through the proposed measure. The infuriated Polish nobles promptly rose in rebellion against the threat to their religion, formed Confederations at Bar and at Radom, and this started a bloody war against the hated Russians. Civil war spread throughout the whole republic.[6]

Russia's invasion of Poland made Kaunitz uneasy. He urged that the Austrian army be set on a war footing as a defence measure, but hoped for peace.[7] Kaunitz's vacillation and inactivity played directly into the hands of Catharine and Frederick; they ceased to fear the Austrian court.[8] Kaunitz's hesitating policy was due

[4] 15-27 December, 1763; Chodzko, *Recueil des traités, etc., concernant la Pologne*, 1762–1862, pp. 3–11.

[5] *See* R. Khevenhüller-Metsch and H. Schlitter, ed., *Aus der Zeit Maria Theresias. Tagebuch des Fürsten J. J. Khevenhüller-Metsch*, 1764–67, 332–3.

[6] J. Lelewel, *Histoire de Pologne*, II, 46–50; Chodzko, *op. cit.*, 44, 59, 61; F. v. Smitt, *Suworow und Polens Untergang*, 40–3; S. Solovyev, *Geschichte des Falles von Polen*, 32, 44; Frederick, King of Prussia, *Oeuvres* (Berlin, 1847), VI, 19.

[7] Kaunitz to Lobkowitz, 25 April, 1767, Haus- Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna (hereafter designated as *V.A.*), Russland, Expeditionen, 1767. Also messages to Lobkowitz, 29 April and 20 May, 1767, to same effect; *ibid.*

[8] "Ich zweifle jetzt nicht mehr . . ., dass sich der Wiener Hof keineswegs in die polnischen Angelegenheiten einmengen werde"; Frederick to Solms, 2 June, 1767; A. H. Loebl, "Österreich und Preussen, 1766–1768," in *Archiv für Oesterreichische Geschichte* (hereafter designated as *A.O.G.*), XCII (1903), 422.

not only to his fear of being embroiled in a war, but also to his belief that the dissidents should be assured "toleration and peace"[9]; consequently he had no objection to the Tsaritsa who tried to carry out precisely that idea.

The Polish confederates, although they fought bravely, crumbled under the attacks of the Russians. The Muscovite conquest of Poland filled the Austrian Chancellor with misgivings. Things were becoming more serious than he had expected, but he still lived in the hope that the Russians would voluntarily withdraw.[10] Such an attitude was surprising in so astute a politician as Kaunitz, but the truth was that short of going to war with Russia he could do nothing but wait. When the news reached Vienna that the King of Prussia planned to send a cordon of troops to Poland, ostensibly to protect his frontiers,[11] Kaunitz decided to do the same on his south-eastern frontier. The military circles in Vienna urged that Austria occupy the Zips townships (which had been mortgaged by Hungary to Poland in 1412, and which had never been reclaimed by the Hungarian crown); but the Chancellor, fearing that such an action would set an example for Frederick to imitate and that the Poles would claim the Zips as an "irrevocable cession," opposed the occupation,[12] which, however, took place in spite of Kaunitz's protests.

In the summer of 1768, the Eastern troubles took a sharp turn for the worse, due to the entrance of the Turks upon the scene. For years the French Foreign Minister, Choiseul, through his able ambassador at Constantinople, Vergennes, had carried on intrigues against Russia. The Porte was at first wary, but when a troop of Cossacks, in their pursuit of certain Polish confederates, entered the Turkish city of Balta, plundered and sacked it, the Grand Vizier, after a stormy interview, threw the Russian envoy,

[9] "Reflexions touchant les affaires de Pologne," 12 July, 1767, *V.A.*, Pohlen, Mémoires, 1767.

[10] On 8 January, 1768, Kaunitz said to the English Ambassador: "Ich hoffe dass Russland bald daran denken wird, seine Truppen aus Polen herauszuziehen, denn ein längerer Aufenthalt daselbst müsste den übrigen Mächten Europas gerechten Grund zu Eifersucht geben"; Loebl, *loc. cit.*, 449.

[11] The Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, Nugent, wrote to Kaunitz, 5 July, 1768: "It is rumoured here that the King will put a military cordon on the Polish frontier next August"; *V.A.*, Preussen, Relationen, 1768.

[12] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 29 July, 1768, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1768: "Von der polnischer Seite schon seit verschiedenen Jahren behauptet werden will, dass die geschehene Verpfändung . . . sich in eine vollkommene und unwiederrufliche Cession verwandelt habe."

Obreskov, into the Seven Towers, and, in October, 1768, declared war on Russia.[13]

The Turkish belligerency complicated the situation enormously. It directly affected both Prussia and Austria. By the terms of the treaty with Catherine, Frederick had to pay an annual subsidy to Russia, and in case of an Austro–Russian war, Prussia was bound to give armed assistance to Russia. The situation disquieted even Frederick.[14] As for Kaunitz, the loss of Silesia still rankled in his mind and he knew from bitter experience what he could expect from the Prussian King. The Chancellor had no doubt that Frederick was only waiting for an opportunity to absorb Ermeland and Polish Prussia, and decided to do everything possible to stop such an aggrandisement and at the same time to prevent a war.[15] The only way to settle the situation, as Kaunitz wrote to Joseph,[16] was to come to an agreement with Frederick. The Chancellor suggested that the Emperor have an interview with the Prussian King, and that the two monarchs promise each other " to live in peace and good friendship, to observe an exact neutrality in case of war."

Despite the fact that Joseph at first rejected the idea, Kaunitz, a *Realpolitiker*, who did not let ancient animosities interfere with his politics, instructed Nugent at Berlin to broach the subject to Frederick. The King of Prussia expressed himself delighted with Vienna's friendly advances and promised to meet Joseph.[17]

Neither Maria Theresa nor Joseph were in favour of coming to a *rapprochement* with Frederick, and Kaunitz set about to overcome the Empress's scruples and hatred of the Prussian King. In a long note to Maria Theresa, the Chancellor summarized the political situation, pointed out that the Russians had ever been weak allies of Austria, and that the ambitious plans of the " Semiramis of the North " were dangerous to the House of Austria. It was a mistake,

[13] N. Jorga, *Geschichte des Osman. Reiches*, IV, 473; J. W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des Osman. Reiches*, V, 907–13; Chodzko, *op. cit.*, 69–72.

[14] Frederick, *Oeuvres*, VI, 22–3.

[15] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 28 August, 1768, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1768: " Die Conquette von Pohlnisch-Preussen und Ermeland wäre vor ihm [Frederick] von einem unschätzbaren und weit grösseren Werth, als ganz Schlesien und Glatz. Durch solche würde er zu einer der fürchterlichsten Mächten von Europa, und als dann wäre das Gleichgewicht zwischen seinem und dem durchläuchtigen Erzhause verlohren, mithin die diesseitige Gefahr ungemein und vor beständig vergrössert."

[16] Kaunitz to Joseph, 28 August, 1768, *ibid.*

[17] Nugent to Kaunitz, 26 November, 1768, *V.A.*, Preussen, Relationen, 1768.

the Chancellor admitted, to have remained aloof in the Polish troubles; Austria must now rectify this error. He pointed out that if the Turks were badly defeated, both Austria and Prussia would find it to their advantage to check a too victorious Russia. The Chancellor then concluded his note with a startling proposal:

"All these views are unquestionably very important, but the most important is this: that without much difficulty . . . Your Majesty could regain Silesia, if not entirely, then in good part, and if not right away, then at the extinction of the Prussian male line . . . This idea that the Turk . . . could help Your Majesty to regain Silesia, is in itself so extraordinary and chimerical that I have hesitated submitting it to you . . . Still the idea is not only not impossible, but perhaps even probable."

The only question, Kaunitz pursued his argument, was how to compensate Prussia. His answer was "that Poland, in order to save herself from Russian slavery and imminent destruction, should voluntarily provide the King of Prussia with the necessary compensation."[18] This was to be the nearest idea of a Polish partition that had as yet been suggested by any Great Power. Although Joseph did not consider Kaunitz's proposal feasible, the Chancellor did not give up his idea of an understanding with the King of Prussia, and in a series of interviews, Nugent, acting upon instructions from Vienna, tried to reassure Frederick that Austria's intentions were disinterested, pacific and friendly.

It was finally decided that Joseph meet Frederick at Neisse, in Moravia, and Kaunitz, realizing that the young Emperor was no match for the crafty Prussian King, drew up a detailed catechism for the benefit of Joseph. The Emperor, ran Kaunitz's instructions, was to assure Frederick of Austria's pacific intentions and of her neutrality in case of a war on the continent, provided of course that Frederick would remain neutral himself. Joseph was also to let the Prussian King understand that Austria was not jealous of the Prusso-Russian alliance. As regards the pressing Polish problem, the Emperor was to explain to the King that Austria's indifference so far was based upon the fact that she believed that

[18] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 3 December, 1768, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1768. Kaunitz, it seems, was not the only one to think of a Polish partition. A Saxon nobleman, Count Lynar, submitted a project to Frederick whereby Austria was to take Lemberg and the Zips; Prussia, Polish Prussia and Ermeland; and Russia whatever she wished. On 3 February, 1769, Frederick sent the project to Solms at St. Petersburg, but due to the fear that Austria would object, the plan was dropped; M. Duncker, *Aus der Zeit Friedrich des Grossen und Friedrich Wilhelm III* (Leipzig, 1876), 178.

" in his own interests, the wisdom of the King of Prussia would not permit things to go too far."[19]

The meeting between the two monarchs took place on 25 August, 1769, and lasted five days. There was a good deal of mutual flattery, conversation and entertainment. The final result was a vague neutrality agreement between the two sovereigns.[20] Kaunitz, fearing that the notes exchanged between Joseph and Frederick would fall into the hands of Choiseul and cause misunderstanding,[21] was not particularly pleased with the Emperor's action, but it was too late to mend matters.

The constant defeat of the Turks by the Russians aroused the fear of both Frederick and Kaunitz. The Chancellor did not wish to see the balance of power in the Orient destroyed, and the King dreaded both an Austrian intervention, which would embroil him in a war, and a Russian aggrandisement. The situation, therefore, was favourable for a further Austro-Prussian understanding. In an interview with Nugent, on 6 May, 1770, the Prussian King suggested that Austria should compensate herself in Bavaria or Italy, in order to offset Russia's gains. Frederick also confided to the Austrian diplomat that the Turks wished for Austrian mediation. Nugent was rather sceptical at Frederick's disclosures.[22]

Kaunitz, who understood the gravity of the situation, decided to reach a definite agreement with Frederick. At Neisse, Joseph and the Prussian King had promised each other to meet again sometime. Kaunitz took advantage of the opening and accompanied the Emperor to Neustadt, in Moravia, where Frederick was to meet the Austrians. The first interview between the Prussians and the Austrians took place on 3 September, 1770. Kaunitz had drawn up a " Political Catechism " for the Prussian King's benefit, determined to teach Frederick politics and to enlighten him as to Austria's system. Needless to say, the witty King of Prussia was highly amused at the pedantic and humourless Austrian Chan-

[19] " Matières que vraisemblablement le Roi de Prusse metta sur le tapis à l'occasion du prochain séjour de l'Empereur à Neisse "; 17 August, 1769, *V.A.*, Pohlen, Erste Theilung, Acten.

[20] The notes, mutually exchanged on 27 and 28 August, read : " I promise . . . that if ever a war breaks out between England and the House of Bourbon, I will faithfully maintain the peace, so happily re-established between us; and that in case another war . . . takes place, I will observe the most exact neutrality "; *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1769.

[21] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 8 September, 1769, *ibid.*

[22] Nugent to Kaunitz, *V.A.*, Preussen, Berichte, 1770 : " Précis des discours que le roy me tint à Potsdam le 6 de May jour de mon audience de congé."

cellor's attitude.[23] As at Neisse, there was much conversation, flattery and entertainment.[24] Kaunitz, delighted with Frederick's charm and flatteries, warmed up to the king and delivered him a long lecture on politics. He explained that Austria's "system" was "absolutely pacific"; that Austria had "absolutely renounced the idea of a reconquest of Silesia"; and that she had no intention of undermining Prussia's friendship with Russia. The cynical King of Prussia pretended to be moved; he embraced the Chancellor and expressed himself "enchanted with all that he heard." Frederick confessed that he was alarmed at the Turkish war, that he wished for peace, but that he was sure Catharine would insist upon some compensation in the East, such as the Crimea and Azov. Kaunitz objected to any augmentation of Russian power and to the disturbance of the balance of power in the Orient. He wished, he said, that Catharine would work out a pacification plan in Poland, withdraw her troops from that republic, and call upon Austria and Prussia to guarantee Polish peace. Frederick agreed in principle, but refused to bind his hands, fearing to antagonise his Russian ally. The total result of the interview, which lasted four days, was an informal neutrality and friendship agreement. Kaunitz was quite satisfied with the result.[25]

Frederick made sincere attempts to convince Catharine to make peace with the Porte and to have Austria mediate. The Tsaritsa coolly refused. Her armies were victorious over the Turks, had occupied Moldavia and Wallachia and a large part of the Black Sea littoral, and were nearing the Austrian lands on the Danube. So long as the Russian Empress was sure of Frederick's friendship and Kaunitz's inactivity, she need not give in. Of course she was shrewd enough to realise that neither her Prussian ally nor the Court of Vienna would allow her to conquer Turkish provinces

[23] Frederick to Rohde, 5 September, 1770, *Polit. Correspondenz*, XXX, 114: "He [Kaunitz] has taken me for nothing but a soldier . . . and I cannot deny that he has amused me quite a bit."

[24] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 7 September, 1770, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1770: "The table was well served. The theatre and the play about as good as one could expect even in Vienna. All our guests are well lodged; the town, too, is very pretty. In short, I have been well pleased. . . . All I can say now is that I have not found the King either as good or as bad as he has been painted."

[25] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 18 September, 1770, *ibid.*: "I have reason to believe," Kaunitz summarised his letter, "that he [Frederick] will trust us in the future, so far as is possible for him to trust anybody, and that we may also trust him more than it has hitherto been wise to do." For texts and further details, *see* A. v. Arneth, *Geschichte Maria Theresia's*, VIII, 211–26; A. Beer, *Dir Erste Theilung Polens*, I, 320–9; Beer, "Die Zusammenkünfte Josefs II und Friedrichs II," in *A.O.G.*, XLVII, 383–527.

without themselves asking for compensations elsewhere. She was, however, willing to wait. But Frederick's notes began to disquiet her. The King of Prussia, fearing the Austrians would lose patience, and anxious lest he himself be involved in a war, urged the Tsaritsa to accept the mediation of Vienna and to state her demands on the Porte.

On 4 January, 1771, Frederick gave an interview to the new Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, Swieten, and in a shocked voice told the diplomat that he had received Russia's peace conditions. They were "exorbitant, intolerable," the King exclaimed; "I cannot communicate the conditions to you, for they are such that you could not but respond with a declaration of war." He did not say what Russia's terms were, but promised to press Catharine for a change of mind.[26]

Catharine's obstinacy and her victories over the Turks made Kaunitz realise he would have to take an active part in the struggle. Although both Maria Theresa and Joseph opposed war, the Chancellor drew up a plan for a neutrality treaty with Prussia and "an immediate understanding with the Porte."[27] Another plan of the Chancellor was an Austro-Prussian armed intervention in Poland.[28] Before taking any active steps, Kaunitz instructed Swieten to get a "categorical" answer from Frederick to the following question: "If Russia should force us to make war against her in some other place outside Poland, will the King be disposed to give us his word of honour that he will interfere neither directly nor indirectly?"[29] Frederick, who had meanwhile had word from Catharine that she was willing to lower her demands and was ready to ask Austria to mediate,[30] told the Austrian Ambassador that whereas he agreed that a military demonstration on the south-eastern Austrian frontier might make the Russians more tractable, he did not think Austria should prepare for war.[31] Kaunitz by now distrusted, or pretended to

[26] Swieten to Kaunitz, 4 January, 1771, *V.A.*, Preussen, Berichte, 1771 Catharine's peace conditions included: (1) the liberation of Obreskov; (2) the cession of Azov; (3) both Kabardias; (4) free navigation on the Black Sea; (5) independence of the Tartars; (6) general amnesty for the Greeks; and (7) the occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia for twenty-five years; *see* Goertz, *Mémoires et actes authentiques relatifs aux négociations, qui ont précédé le partage de la Pologne*, 107.

[27] "Kurze Anmerkungen über die gegenwärtigen Weltumständen in Beziehung auf die Sicherheit und Aufrechthaltung des Durchlaucht. Erzhauses," 23 January, 1771, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1771; text in Beer, *op. cit.*, "Documente," 23–6.

[28] Kaunitz to Swieten, 23 January, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Weis., 1771.

[29] Kaunitz to Swieten, 22 January, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Weis., 1771.

[30] Catharine to Frederick, 30 January, 1771, Goertz, *op. cit.*, 136.

[31] Swieten to Kaunitz, 17 February, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Ber., 1771.

distrust, Catharine, and informed the Prussian King that he would promptly send an army to Hungary.[32]

In reality, Kaunitz, as he pointed out in a long memoir to his ambassador in St. Petersburg, Lobkowitz, had no intention of going to war. The important thing, the Chancellor wrote, was to avoid "an open rupture" between Russia, Prussia and Austria, although he admitted he was worried at the "very suspicious Russian and Prussian aggrandisement schemes in Poland." Above all, Lobkowitz was to keep in mind, Austria wished for peace. "Peace," the Chancellor concluded, "is the main prop of our system"; the army in Hungary was for the purpose of "protecting our safety," and not for war.[33]

When Kaunitz received news from Lobkowitz that the Russian Chancellor, Count Panin, had expressed a cordial desire for an understanding with Austria, and that Russia demanded from the Turks only Moldavia-Wallachia and the free navigation of the Black Sea,[34] he answered that he doubted whether the Porte would agree to any loss of territory, and that Russia's plans were hardly compatible with Austria's interests. Panin's proposal, the Chancellor thought, would considerably increase Russia's power and leave Turkey nothing but the "sad prospect of her destruction, more or less distant, but inevitable."[35]

So far, although Poland was the cause of the Russo-Turkish war, the Polish problem hardly came up in the negotiations. In January, 1771, Catharine, in a conversation with Frederick's brother, Prince Henry, suggested that since Austria had occupied the Zips (in 1769), the other Powers should do the same in Poland. This was the first definite partition suggestion.[36]

Henceforth the King of Prussia became the spokesman for a Polish partition. Since Poland was responsible for the Russo-Turkish war, Frederick wrote, she should also pay the "damages."[37] Count Panin, too, was willing that Austria and Prussia compensate themselves in Poland.[38] Kaunitz, however, had no such intentions.

[32] Kaunitz to Swieten, 1 March, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Weis., 1771.

[33] "Anmerkungen. Loco Instructionis für Fürsten Lobkowitz," 7 March, 1771, *V.A.*, Russl., Exped., 1771.

[34] Lobkowitz to Kaunitz, 26 April, 1771, *V.A.*, Russl., Rel., 1771.

[35] "Réponse verbale à l'exposé confidentiel des intentions de l'Impératrice de Russie sur sa pacification avec les Turcs, ainsi qu'aux communications ultérieures qui ont été faites à cette occasion au Prince de Lobkowitz," 1 July 1771, *V.A.*, Russl., Exped., 1771.

[36] Prince Henry to Frederick, 8 January, 1771; Frederick, *Oeuvres*, XXVI (Berlin, 1855), 345.

[37] Frederick to Solms, 27 February, 1771, in Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 60.

[38] Solms to Frederick, 25 February, 1, 4, 8, 29 March, 1771, *ibid.*, 61–3.

He wished to see Poland pacified, but not dismembered.[39] To Frederick, on the other hand, it was clear that peace could be made only at the price of Poland. He said to Swieten, "Search in your archives and see if you do not find title to some other districts. . . . I, too, am going to take my share, and Russia will take hers."[40] Since Frederick was so eager for Polish territory, Kaunitz conceived the brilliant idea of allowing Prussia to take whatever she wished in Poland in return for Glatz and part of Silesia to Austria.[41] Otherwise, he was cool to any "dismemberment projects."[42] To force his hand, however, Prussia and Russia had drawn up a preliminary partition convention in May, 1772.[43] When Kaunitz learned of this convention, he refused to consider mediation, informed Catharine that Austria would have to go to the aid of Turkey,[44] and prepared for war.

Kaunitz's answer to the Russo-Prussian convention was a treaty with Turkey, signed on 6 July, 1771, by which Austria bound herself to help the Porte recover the territory lost to Russia during the war. In return, Turkey promised to pay Austria a subsidy of eleven and a quarter million gulden in annual payments, cede to Vienna that portion of Wallachia which bordered upon Transylvania, the Banat and the river Olt, and grant Austrian merchants favourable commercial privileges.[45]

Frederick did not give up hope of bringing about an amicable adjustment. To mollify Austria, the King of Prussia was authorised by Catharine to offer Vienna the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia to return them to Turkey, and cede Belgrade to Austria.[46] Kaunitz considered the proposal a trick to compromise him with Turkey, and bluntly rejected the offer, saying that he had decided "in cold blood, to dare everything rather than endanger our safety."[47] Kaunitz's belligerent attitude frightened Frederick and even Catharine.[48]

At this point, however, Maria Theresa, who had loyally backed Kaunitz, lost her nerve. In an interview with the Prussian chargé d'affaires, Rohde, on 7 September, she confessed she really did not

[39] Kaunitz to Swieten, 10 April, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Weis., 1771.
[40] Swieten to Kaunitz, 27 April, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Ber., 1771.
[41] Kaunitz to Swieten, 7 May, 1771, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1771.
[42] *Id.* to *id.*, 5 June, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Weis., 1771.
[43] Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 78–9; Chodzko, *op. cit.*, 89.
[44] Kaunitz to Catharine, 1 July, 1771, in Goertz, *op. cit.*, 40.
[45] *Ibid.*, 146–53; Chodzko, *op. cit.*, 92–5.
[46] Swieten to Kaunitz, 12 July, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Ber., 1771.
[47] Kaunitz to Swieten, 5 August, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Weis., 1771; text in Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 314–5.
[48] Frederick to Henry, 14 August, 1771, in Sorel, *The Eastern Question*, 160–1.

wish for war, and that she hoped " to find a solution without having recourse to arms." Rohde promptly wrote the significant news to his king.[49]

Frederick was, of course, delighted to hear that there was no danger of war from Austria. Kaunitz, however, had an unpleasant shock. His whole elaborately built diplomatic structure collapsed about him. He bitterly upbraided the Empress for endangering the " safety of our Monarchy," and concluded :[50]

" I cannot hide from you that were it not for my conviction that Rohde must have misunderstood you . . ., I would have lost courage for the first time in my life.

The Chancellor, his pride hurt and his plans upset, did not know what policy to pursue. His memoir to Maria Theresa and Joseph, summarising the political position, left the decision as to what to do to his sovereigns.[51] Joseph, with his mother's consent, proposed that Austria should ally with Russia to prevent a dismemberment of Poland.[52] The Chancellor, having no alternative, agreed with the Emperor.[53]

On 24 October, 1771, Kaunitz called the Russian Ambassador in Vienna, Prince Golitsyn, for a conference, and told him that although Austria could not accept Russia's peace conditions, she was anxious for peace, and willing to " concur with the Empress . . . in the pacification of Poland."[54] Panin's answer was sharp. He thought the hypocritical Kaunitz had better realise " that we have settled everything already, and that it would therefore better repay the Court of Vienna also to make acquisitions."[55] Fortunately, Golitsyn was careful not to tell Kaunitz the contents of Panin's note. All that the Chancellor knew was, as Swieten informed him, that Russia was willing to compromise.[56]

In a second interview with Golitsyn, Kaunitz admitted he was ready to reach an understanding with Russia. He hoped, he said,

[49] Rohde to Frederick, 7 September, 1771, in Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 107; Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 323; Frederick, *Pol. Corresp.*, XXXI, 362–3.

[50] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 23 September, 1771, in Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 325–6; Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 109.

[51] " Kurze Abschilderung von unsern bisherigen Maasnehmungen," 25 September, 1771, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1771; Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 100–3.

[52] " Denkschrift Kaiser Josefs," 26 September, 1771, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1771.

[53] Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 29 September, 1771, *ibid.*

[54] " Wesentlicher Inhalt meiner den 24 Oktober, 1771, mit dem Ruszisch Kaiserlichen Minister Herrn Fürsten Galitzin gepflogenen Unterredung," in Beer, *op. cit.*, " Documente," 32–8; Goertz, *op. cit.*, 75.

[55] Panin to Gallitzin, 6 December, 1771, in Sorel, *op. cit.*, 175–8; Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 334.

[56] Swieten to Kaunitz, 29 December, 1771, *V.A.*, Preuss., Ber., 1771.

that Poland would not be dismembered, but since that appeared inevitable, "Austria would not, of course, regard with indifference the aggrandisement of her neighbours." "Therefore," he went on, "it becomes merely a question of *quomodo* and of the proportional advantages of each of the Powers."[57] On the same date the Chancellor submitted seven partition projects to Maria Theresa, the first three of which were aimed at Austria's ally, Turkey, and the last four concerned Poland. Kaunitz analysed each plan, pointing out the relative advantages and disadvantages of each. He himself favoured a partition of Turkey, whereby Austria was to get Bosnia, Servia, Dalmatia, Wallachia and Bulgaria. As regards Poland, Kaunitz took the stand that, whatever happened, Austria must have precisely the same share as the other two Powers. He hoped things could be so arranged that Frederick would exchange Glatz and part of Silesia for Austria's share in Poland; failing that, Austria should demand Ansbach and Bayreuth. Only as a final resort should Vienna satisfy herself with a portion of Poland.[58]

Maria Theresa did not wish to make a decision without consulting the Emperor. Joseph disagreed with Kaunitz's plan,[59] and the Chancellor found it necessary to write a long defence of his position, wherein he pointed out how it was necessary for Austria to compromise and to co-operate with Prussia and Russia. "My most careful aim," he concluded, "has . . . been to prevent either a war with . . . Prussia or such a peace as would redound to the advantage of Russia and . . . Prussia."[60] Kaunitz's answer convinced Joseph, but Maria Theresa was averse to any partition. Still, she was forced to admit there was no way out but to participate in the spoils, whether Turkish or Polish.[61]

When Swieten, in accord with the instructions from Vienna, proposed the exchange of Glatz and Silesia to Frederick, the Prussian

[57] "Exposé de ce qui s'est passé dans une entrevue, à laquelle m'a invité hier le 17-28 Janvier le Prince de Kaunitz," in Goertz *op. cit.*, 183–91.

[58] "Des Chevalier Massin Sieben Tractatsvorschläge," 17 January, 1772, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1772. Massin, a French noble, had been an admiral in the Russian navy. He submitted his Partition Project to Kaunitz for consideration. *See* Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 129–34; Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 339–43; Sorel, *op. cit.*, 180–1.

[59] "Denkschrift Kaiser Josefs," 19 January, 1772, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1772; text in Beer, *op. cit.*, "Documente," 39–42.

[60] "Denkschrift des Fürsten Kaunitz," 20 January, 1772, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1772; text in Beer, *op. cit.*, "Documente," 42–8.

[61] "Anmerkungen Ihrer Majestät der Kaiserin Königin die Theilung Polens betreffend," 22 January, 1772, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1772; text in Beer *op. cit.*, II, 340–1; Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 351–4.

King told him curtly: "You can take your share wherever you please, but not at my expense." He was, however, more tractable regarding Austrian compensation in Turkey, promising to communicate it to Catharine.[62] Disturbed by Kaunitz's "bad faith," as he called it, Frederick hastened to write to St. Petersburg, urging the conclusion of the partition treaty, so as to present Austria with a *fait accompli*.[63]

Frederick's refusal to exchange Glatz and Silesia left Kaunitz no choice but to consider what he could gain in Turkey. But here Maria Theresa vigorously objected. She considered it immoral to dismember an ally, and anyhow, she wrote, the Turkish provinces were desolate and unhealthful. Reluctantly and almost bitterly the Empress came to the conclusion that Poland would have to pay the price of Catharine's victories in Turkey.[64] Kaunitz thereupon submitted a project whereby Austria and Poland should divide between themselves the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, which were lost to the Porte anyhow. "By this plan," Kaunitz wrote, "Your Majesty will satisfy the most scrupulous delicacy and at the same time fulfil her sacred duties as a sovereign to her State."[65] Maria Theresa accepted the plan,[66] but Joseph was not satisfied; he wanted much more. The Empress was almost in despair. "Save me and the State," she implored Kaunitz; "I will support you, for I see things in a different light from my son."[67] Kaunitz took his time answering, and Maria Theresa, impatient and anxious, wrote him, "I am not strong enough to rule by myself. Therefore, and not without deepest sorrow, I allow you to pursue your own path."[68]

In the first week of March, Kaunitz received word from St. Petersburg that Russia and Prussia had signed a treaty to partition Poland.[69] Vienna was also informed that the partitioners were willing to abide by Kaunitz's wish that the principle of equality of

[62] Swieten to Kaunitz, 5 February, 1772, *V.A.*, Preuss., Ber., 1772.

[63] Frederick to Solms, 2, 9, 16 and 17 February, 1772, in Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 159.

[64] Maria Theresa to Kaunitz; the letter bears no date, but was probably written on 12 February, 1772; text in Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 358–60, 595–6.

[65] *Id.* to *id.*, 13 February, 1772, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1772.

[66] Maria Theresa to Kaunitz, 13 February, 1772, *ibid.*; text in Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 596–9.

[67] *Id.* to *id.*; the letter bears no date, but was probably written between 13 and 17 February, 1772, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1772; text in Arneth, *op. cit.*, VIII, 364; and in Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 164.

[68] *Id.* to *id.*, 17 February, 1772, *V.A.*, Pohlen, Erste Theilung, Acten.

[69] The treaty was signed at St. Petersburg on 17 February, 1772; text in F. Martens, *Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie avec les puissances étrangères, VI, Allemagne*, 71–7.

shares be observed,[70] and that they were anxious to hear Kaunitz's terms.[71] After several days of preparation, the Chancellor had his demands ready. Austria wished to have all of Galicia, including the Palatinates of Cracow and Lemberg, the northern boundary line to be Sandomir and Lublin, and the south-eastern border, Volhynia, Podolia and Transylvania.[72] Kaunitz knew he was asking too much, but it could do no harm to demand as much as possible.[73]

The King of Prussia thought Austria's demands too high, but said that if Russia had no objections he would have none either.[74] Panin, however, did object, especially to the cession of the salt mines of Bochnia and Wieliczka, and to Lemberg,[75] adding that if Frederick agreed he himself would yield the points. Kaunitz was obstinate. He frankly admitted that Lemberg and the salines were the only claims which had any " real value," and that they formed the only connection between Upper Silesia and the low land.[76]

Despite the high-sounding diplomatic phraseology, the struggle between the three courts was, at bottom, an economic one. Kaunitz knew that Frederick's share in Poland would give Prussia control over the Polish Vistula trade, and the Prussian King was aware that the control of Bochnia and Wieliczka meant a virtual salt monopoly for Austria in Central Europe.[77] Swieten told Frederick that either Prussia and Russia yield to Austria's demands or reduce their own claims proportionately.[78] The King of Prussia, fearing further complications, finally instructed his Ambassador at St. Petersburg not to oppose Austria any further.

" In the name of the Very Holy Trinity," the treaties were signed at St. Petersburg on 5 August, 1772. Austria was given practically all that she had asked, and bound herself to use her " good offices " to bring about a Russo-Turkish peace.[79].

The job of making the Poles ratify the treaties, Kaunitz left to the experienced Russians. Like Panin, Kaunitz wished to

[70] Lobkowitz to Kaunitz, 7 March, 1772, *V.A.*, Russl., Rel., 1772.

[71] Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 171.

[72] Kaunitz to Lobkowitz and Swieten, 11 April, 1772, *V.A.*, Russl., Exped., and Preuss., Weis., 1772; Beer, *op. cit.*, II, 172–3.

[73] Kaunitz to Lobkowitz, 11 April, 1772, *V.A.*, Russl., Exped., 1772.

[74] Swieten to Kaunitz, 19 April, 1772, *V.A.*, Preuss., Ber., 1772.

[75] Lobkowitz to Kaunitz, 1 and 28 May, 1772, *V.A.*, Russl., Rel., 1772.

[76] Kaunitz to Lobkowitz, 28 May, 1772, *V.A.*, Russl., Exped., 1772; text in Beer, *op. cit.*, " Documente," 217–19.

[77] *See* Frederick's characteristic letter to Prince Henry, 18 June, 1772, in *Oeuvres*, XXVI, 359; and Kaunitz's letter to Swieten, 5 July, 1772, *V.A.*, Preuss., Weis., 1772.

[78] Swieten to Kaunitz, 14 July, 1772, *V.A.*, Preuss., Ber., 1772.

[79] *V.A.*, Russl., Rel., 1772; for text of treaty, *see* Martens, *op. cit.*, II, *Autriche*, 24–9.

see Poland pacified, but to leave her a "puissance intermédiaire."[80] It was also necessary to promulgate a manifesto justifying the partitioners' activities in the dismembered country. Kaunitz drew up such an instrument. It said, in effect, that since Polish anarchy threatened the interests of the neighbouring Powers, a "prompt remedy" was necessary, and that the three partitioners were determined to make good "their ancient rights and legitimate pretentions on the possessions of the Republic."[81]

Turkey, sacrificed by her Austrian ally to make a Polish holiday, broke up the peace congress which had met at Focşani on 19 August, 1772, and the Russo–Turkish war dragged on for another two years. Catharine sent an ultimatum to the Polish Diet, demanding that the treaties be ratified by the end of April, 1773.[82] Russian bayonets did the rest. The Austro–Polish ratification took place on 18 September, 1773. The boundaries were settled on 9 February, 1776, by which time Austria had taken part of Podolia.[83]

The first partition was lethal to the Poles. Logically and inevitably it led to a second and a third, until Poland was nothing but a geographic expression. As regards the Habsburg Empire, the acquisition of more alien territory and people added immeasurably to its weakness and ultimate decline. The partition brought Russia to central Europe, and made her a dangerous rival and enemy of Austria. As a buffer state between Russia and Austria, and as a country traditionally bound to enmity with Prussia, Poland had served an important purpose. Kaunitz's instinct in opposing a Polish dismemberment was sound. Nevertheless he was forced to share in the partition, and thus helped to bring about the collapse of Austria, a country which he had faithfully served for half a century.

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[80] Kaunitz to Lobkowitz, 31 August, 1772, *V.A.*, Russl., Exp., 1772.

[81] 23 July, 1772, *V.A.*, Vorträge, 1772.

[82] Copy sent by Lobkowitz to Kaunitz, 25 December, 1772, *V.A.*, Russl., Rel., 1772.

[83] By the first partition Poland lost 4,000 sq. m. of territory and 5,000,000 people. Prussia's share was 644 sq. m., and Austria's portion, 1,300 sq. m.; Brüggen, *op. cit.*, 347–8; Duncker, *op. cit.*, 261; Frederick, *Oeuvres*, VI, 90. As regards resources, Galicia was by far the richest of the three portions. It contained 118 towns, 192 market places, 6,187 villages, 357,017 horses, and 343,177 oxen. Its population was estimated by an Austrian census-taker to be 3,280,656, although this is probably too high a figure. The income for the year 1787 was 4,200,000 florins, or about double the income from Prussia's share; *V.A.*, Pohlen, Mémoires, undated, but probably written some time in 1787 or 1788.

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